

The New Frontier

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about how President Kennedy dealt with explosive foreign matters.

In this section, you will read about Kennedy's domestic agenda and how his presidency—and life—was cut short.

AS YOU READ

Use this diagram to take notes about Kennedy's New Frontier programs.

New Frontier The name given to Kennedy's domestic program

mandate An overwhelming show of support by voters

Peace Corps A program that enlisted volunteers to help in poor countries

Alliance for Progress A program that supplied aid to Latin America

Warren Commission The body that investigated the assassination of President Kennedy

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION
deficit spending	government spends more than it has in order to boost economy

The Promise of Progress

(pages 679–682)

What were Kennedy's domestic plans?

President Kennedy called his domestic program the **New Frontier**. However, Kennedy had a difficult time getting Congress to support his program. Conservative Republicans and southern Democrats blocked many of his bills. These included bills to provide medical care for the aged, rebuild cities, and aid education.

One reason for Kennedy's difficulties was that he was elected by a small margin. As a result, he lacked a popular **mandate**, or a clear indication that the voters approved of his plans. Because he

lacked overwhelming support, Kennedy rarely pushed hard for his bills.

Kennedy did succeed with some proposals. To help the economy grow, the Kennedy administration used deficit spending. This occurred when the government spent more money than it received in taxes. Kennedy hoped that increased spending on defense would help boost the economy.

Kennedy also introduced the **Peace Corps**. This was a program of volunteers working in poor nations around the world. The purpose of this program was to decrease poverty *abroad*. It was also meant to increase goodwill toward the United States. The Peace Corps was a huge success.

People of all ages and backgrounds signed up to work for the organization. By 1968, more than 35,000 volunteers had served in 60 nations around the world.

Another program was the **Alliance for Progress**. This program gave aid to Latin American countries. One reason for this program was to keep communism from spreading to these countries.

In 1961 the Soviets launched a person into orbit around the earth. The news stunned America. A space race began between the United States and Soviet Union. President Kennedy pledged that the nation would put a man on the moon by the end of the decade. That goal was reached on July 20, 1969, when Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon.

The space race affected American society in many ways. Schools taught more science. Researchers developed many new technologies. The space race also contributed to economic growth.

The Kennedy administration also tried to solve the problems of poverty and racism. In 1963, Kennedy called for a national effort to fight American poverty. He also ordered the Justice Department to investigate racial injustices in the South.

1. Name two successful programs of the Kennedy administration.

Tragedy in Dallas (pages 682–683)

Who killed President Kennedy?

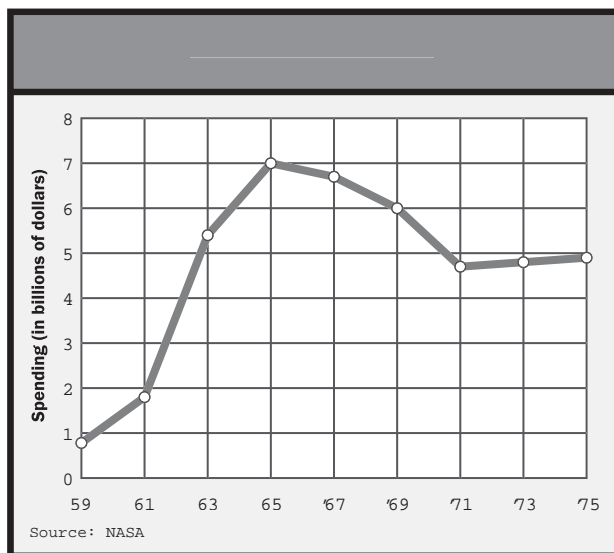
On November 22, 1963, President and Mrs. Kennedy arrived in Dallas, Texas. Kennedy had come there to improve relations with the state's Democratic Party. Large crowds greeted the Kennedys as they rode along the streets of downtown Dallas. Then, rifle shots rang out. Kennedy had been shot. The president died about an hour later at a nearby hospital.

The tragic news spread across the nation and then around the world. Millions of Americans sat glued to their televisions over the next few days. They watched on live television as a gunman shot and killed the president's accused killer, Lee Harvey Oswald.

The events seemed too strange to believe. Many people wondered if Oswald had acted alone or with others. Chief Justice Earl Warren headed a commission to investigate the assassination. The **Warren Commission** determined that Oswald acted alone. However, many people continue to believe that Oswald was part of a *conspiracy*.

The assassination taught Americans that their system of government could survive an upset. Lyndon Johnson took office on Kennedy's death and promised to carry on his programs.

2. What did the Warren Commission determine?



Skillbuilder

Use the chart to answer these questions.

1. Between which two years was there a dramatic rise in government expenditures for space activities?

2. How much was spent in 1965?
